DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 320 461 FL 800 168

AUTHOR Finsterbusch, Marty; And Others
TITLE Reaching and Serving Diverse Constituencies in Adult Literacy Education: Summary of Remarks Made at the State Literacy Initiatives Exchange Conference (Harrisburg, PA, April 2, 1990).
PUB DATE 2 Apr 90
NOTE 15p.; The second paper will not reproduce well due to dot-matrix type.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Basic Education; Adult Literacy; *Correctional Education; *English (Second Language); Illiteracy; Instructional Materials; *Literacy Education; *Newspapers; *Outreach Programs; Program Implementation; Second Language Instruction; Second Language Learning; *Student Participation; Volunteers
IDENTIFIERS Correctional Education Association

ABSTRACT

Conference presentations of four individuals are included. The first presentation, by a new reader (Marty Finsterbusch), discusses the diversity of the illiterate population and urges new readers to become actively involved in the instruction and administration of literacy programs. Advantages include improved recruitment, improved communication with students, and improved input for program design and implementation. "Who We Are, What We Do and Where We Need to Go" (Stephen J. Steurer), is a detailed outline of an oral presentation that provides statistics on the corrections system and outlines the successes, problems, and issues faced by the correctional education system. Elements needed for improved cooperation of staff and inmates are noted, including more programs and planning, better publicity, federal initiatives, and better use of existing resources. The role of the Correctional Education Association and of the general public is highlighted. "Literacy for Second Language Learners" (JoAnn Crandall) describes the population of students developing literacy in English as a Second Language and outlines issues in program planning such as degree of literacy, native language literacy, choice of language for literacy, and program type. "The Role of Newspapers in Literacy Education: The Experiences of Rio Grande Valley" (Jack C. Hatfield) shares one region's experiences with grass-roots efforts to deal with a local illiteracy problem. (MSE) (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED320461

REACHING AND SERVING DIVERSE CONSTITUENCIES IN ADULT LITERACY EDUCATION: SUMMARY OF REMARKS MADE AT THE STATE LITERACY INITIATIVES EXCHANGE CONFERENCE, HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA APRIL 2, 1990

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J. Crandall

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

FL800168

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

April 2, 1990

Marty Finsterbusch
State Literacy Initiative Network Conference - Harrisburg, PA

The speaker is Marty Finsterbusch who is with Laubach Literacy Action and is our new reader representative from Delaware County.

MARTY: Yes, I'm a new reader representative, and if you're expecting the typical new reader speech about how wonderful my life has changed and that I'm a totally different person, and on and on, so that everyone walks out of here feeling great, I'm not going to do it. I could do it, but I won't. It is time for new readers to start getting involved and taking action. Our topic is "Reaching and Serving Diverse Communities". I want to show how new readers can do just that. But first of all, who are we talking about? Who are we trying to reach? I heard descriptions earlier today of how some people see us as "slumped over, wearing dirty clothes," that we're unshaven and that we have no thought or whatever. But the people I'm talking about are your children, your brothers, your sisters, your spouse, your parents. When we talk about serving "diverse communities," look right in front of you. These are the people we're talking about. They're not out-of-our-way; they're not out of our neighborhood, they're right next door, they're right in your house, they're right in your family. They share your same name. So when we start talking about reaching the diverse communities, look right there.

New readers are finally getting active. In the past, it's always been the service providers, the professionals who laid out strategies, who got people, who brought them in, who got them up to the skill levels and who let them go. But now the students

themselves are saying "Wait a minute. You got me to this level, now what do I do? Where do I go? How can I help out?" Before I was told, "You can't. I mean, you're not a professional. There's no place for you." Now we're saying, "We can help each other. Adult learners are the best recruiters. You can campaign, you can get on TV, saying, "You need help! Come to see us! The reality is that when I and other new readers go public, or even just talk about literacy and how we got better, people will come forward: in our own workplaces and families. Our own brothers who we didn't even know went through the same things come forward. We're the best recruiters.

But we're more than that. We're taking active roles within our programs. We can input in our program, we can help the other people in our programs. And a lot of local literacy-based volunteer organizations are having their students get together. They're helping each other. By coming together and just talking, we're taking some of this burden off ourselves. We're helping support each other. At the same time we're also helping support the literacy program. We're catching information that would never have been caught before. Say, if there's a problem between tutor and student, the director or coordinator will always talk to the tutor, but they never really talk to the student and the student will not talk to the coordinator or the teacher. But when students are with other students, they say, "Hey, my tutor doesn't show up," or "This curriculum is not right for me," or "I have a family problem." We're able, when necessary, to get that information back to the program.

We've now told the teacher we're helping each other, we're inputting back into the program. And I think it can go a little bit farther. What else can we do? We can also help run the programs. We can get on the board of directors. We can learn the policies, we can learn to talk with other board members who might never have seen a student in real life. We could be on the board and say, "Here we are, we're human, we're not what you thought." It would change the whole structure of the board.

There's a lot we could do, and there's a lot going on. And one last little plug of things you should lay your hands on. There was an Adult Literacy Congress in Washington last September. Eighty-two adult learners got together from around the country, and they picked ten topics that they identified, (not "professionals") of what they thought needs to be done. And they went in there and they argued and said what they thought was the problem and they made recommendations. This is a great resource, coming from the people who are most effective. And they're the people I represent and these are the people I wish you'd get to know, invite them onto your board, listen to them. They can give you ideals that you had never imagined, and when they talk about reaching the diverse communities, you're reaching for human beings, you're reaching for your own family members. Thank you.

Who We Are, What We Do and Where We Need to Go

NGA Conference April 2, 1990

by Stephen J. Steurer, Ph.D., Executive Director
Correctional Education Association

WHO ARE WE AND WHAT DO WE DO?

ABC Irving Johnson PSA tape - "Things are real bad in jail"

The Average Juvenile, Prison or Jail Inmate - Chances are:
- he/she is functionally illiterate]
- educationally handicapped
- used to living below the poverty level
- no academic credentials to speak of
- little or no job history
- history of drug/alcohol abuse

Yet almost all juveniles and jail inmates return to society within a year or two and 90% of the prison inmates will be released within 5 years

1,000,000 adult incarcerated in jails and prisons at this time

3,700,000 adults under criminal justice supervision (parole, probation or incarceration) - **1 Of every 49 adults, or 1 of every 27 men and 1 of every 194 women under supervision in 1988, disproportionate among minorities**

Corrections is part of a larger national crisis
-Adults
- 25 millions adult Americans functional illiterate
- losses to economy total over $225 billion annually in productivity, unrealized tax revenue, welfare, crime, poverty and other social ills
- affects every class but especially poor and minority
- 1/3 of mohters on AFDC, 70% Of inmates, 40% youth are illiterate
- 13 % of workforce illiterate
- employer survey shows over 50% employees with problems in reading, writing, grammar and math
- by year 2000 13.5 years of education required for most new jobs

- 25 million workers will need to upgrade present skills by year 2000 to remain competitive

-**Youth**

- 1 miilion youth drop out each year, 85% functionally illiterate
- less than half of graduating seniors can carry out moderately comples tasks according to recent NAEP studies; 80% inadequate writing skills
- 85% of young women who become pregnant before age 20 are dropouts or failing in school
- 85% of youth appearing in court are functionally illiterate

We therefore have a mandate to help ourselves by helping them and by publicizing the problem in more than terms of public safety, but in terms of a national crisis which correctional education is a part of. We cannot be swept under the carpet because our problem is everybody's

Yet emphasis is on lock-up and detain vs. services in education and drug therapy. **The public needs another side of the story.**

What Are We Doing for our students?

Most juvenile and prison systems have a range of educational services

- ABE
- GED
- vocational education/apprenticeship
- Chapter I
- special education
- college courses
- library services

Unfortunately jails have few such services in most cases.

But only about 20% of the prison inmates are being served nationally.

State funding accounts for over 90% of the services for juvenile and adults, 10% or less from federal sources.

No one knows for sure **what funding levels exists for jail education.**

Chief **federal sources** include:

- vocational education act (Carl Perkins)
- Chapter I Neglected & Delinquent (adult and juvenile to age 21)
- Adult Education (10% set-aside)
- Special education (federal law 94-142 funds)

- Vocational Rehab
- JTPA (Department of Labor)
- LSCA (libraries)
- Pell grants (higher ed)

Some Positive Discernable Trends

- **mandatory education and incentive programs** (pay, time off sentence, better jobs, better pay, awards for achievement such as diplomas

At Same Time Some Problems within the prison, jail and juvenile systems

- disincentives such as higher pay for other assignments, no pay for school, poor programs, prior negative experiences, peer pressure, **poor staff training prior to and during job assignment**

Large Systemic Issues Across the Country

- programs continuing after release (transition programs)
- skill transfer from training behind bars
- interagency cooperation (corrections, parole and social agencies)
- lack of programs in community for any adult illiterate yet alone former inmates
- lack of national clearinghouse for CE information
- lack of coordination and TA at federal level (U.S. D. O. E.)
- no unified federal legislation on correctional education

Yet.....

- Good programs such as NIC and PLUS studies on effective literacy programs
- **recidivism and educational attainment negatively correlated** in Illinois, Alabama and Maryland studies on vocational and high school completion

My personal crusade has been for better basic and special education programs in Maryland. Let me show you how we can involve staff and inmates to work together positively. **(Maryland Video)**

- inmates get a sense for once in their live about **the joy of helping others** and how often does that happen in a prison
- inmates helping others (Maryland and other states with peer tutoring) **such a waste of resources**. Encourage inmates to help one another - extra time off sentence for school attendance and tutoring

CEA - What Does It Do To Help?

- Membership services - journals and newsletters, t.b.a. teacher publication, insurance, information
- regional and international conferences - Vancouver, 1990, Washington, D.C., 1991, Orlando, 1992; England 1989 and Holland, 1991
- Special conferences - TIE, Learning Handicapped Conference, Drugs/Literacy (AJA/CEA) to train staff in new ideas and approaches
- Leadership conferences for advocacy, White House symposium to make our case with the country's leaders
- CEA teleconference "Education in Corrections: Skills and Attitudes for Life and Workplace" May 2nd
- Future training efforts either by conference or tape on specific topics
- Standards development and accreditation/evaluation of programs
- Special publications - Learning Behind Bars - PBS/CEA, TIE

WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE? WHAT IS NEEDED?

More **Programs and Planning** Obviously

- diversion at the jail level - drug, alcohol, literacy and job
- more at risk programs in public and private schools
- more variety and quantity in prisons, but also tied to community (TIE concept
- More cooperation among CEA and others such as ACA, AJA, NJDA, CIA in program planning and conferences

Better Publicity for the Cause of CE

- PLUS can help but each of us must wage a constant battle to publicize the problems and our contribution to the solutions - newspaper, politicians, television and radio
- Correctional education problems to be seen as part of the total picture on illiteracy, drugs, teen pregnancy, drop-out rates, welfare and poverty as well as national competitiveness. **Prisons can be factories and schools behind bars as Chief Justice Warren Burger said 10 years ago**

Federal Initiatives

- Office of Correctional Education at U.S.D.O.E. - let's hope, please write now about S. 1109 to your representative and senators **(thank Simon and Donaldson and Hartzel on literacy)** We need to write particularly to the House Committee on Elementary, Secondary and Vocational Education to go along with the provisions of S. 1109 which help

correctional education - i.e. treating correctional education agencies as local education agencies for funding, supporting the Office of Correctional Education in the U.S. Department of Education and making correctional educators eligible for training and technical assistance as other vocational educators are.
- better funding in Chapter I N& D, Adult Education, Vo Ed, Pell grants, special education
- More emphasis on treatment in drug war

And CEA?
- increase teacher services with teacher publications
- push standards and certification/evaluation forward
- advocate for legislation such as Vo-Ed and literacy
- advocate for better public image for programs (e.g. drug war)
- training conferences such as teleconferencing and special topic meeting
- make our case with other educational and correctional professionals

Better Use of Existing Resources
- use of inmate tutors
- more support for and from correctional staff
- better coordination among correctional agencies

Finally
- Tune in on **May 2nd** - basic skills in correctional education

Brian Zamorra Tape.
- "Doing Time Does Not Have to Be a Waste of Time"

It's in Our Own Interest - 1,000,000 incarcerated

Let Me Read a Letter to Make a Final Point

Dear Jeff,

I just heard about your recent incarceration. You and I haven't seen each other since my sister Denise got married three years ago in Chicago. I remember having a good time with you. Remember how we carried you to

the car and took you back to grandma and grandpa's from the reception. You certainly had a good time.

Uncle Bob told my mom about your recent problems. All I know at this point is that you got into trouble with drugs and have a sentence of three years to serve. If I am in Indiana I will come to visit, if you wish. Meantime, I would like to communicate by pen.

If there is anything I can do to help, please let me know.

Your cousin,

Steve (Steurer)

How about your family, friends, neighbors?

It affects us all, very directly. If our relatives are in jail, it costs us plenty as taxpayers and family members. Get this story out to the public.

Yet the prevailing attitude is to lock them up and punish them. That does not work and is very short sighted. The spectacular criminal -multiple murderer is still the exception. But we live by our worst examples. Murders. Rapists. Riots. Most inmates are doing shorter sentences for lesser crimes. Education and job training along with drug therapy and counseling are part of the answer.

Let's get the message out to the public.

"Doing Time <u>Does Not</u> Have to Be a Waste of Time."

Thank you for your time and for having me, hope I have shared some new ideas and information with you and encouraged you in some little way.

Literacy for Second Language Learners

JoAnn (Jodi) Crandall, Director, National Clearinghouse on Literacy Education,
Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, DC

During the past 15 years, the United States has experienced a dramatic shift in population. During that period, approximately one million refugees from Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, and Africa resettled in our country. Added to this population is an estimated one million or more legal and undocumented immigrants, mostly from Central America, who arrive each year. Currently, some 600,000 legal refugees and immigrants enter the country annually. The Hispanic population is the fastest growing population in the United States, and with larger family size, is likely to continue to be so. The Asian-American population, in addition, has grown dramatically.

These refugees and immigrants join a large number of resident Americans for whom English is a second language. Their degree of proficiency in English language differs, as does their literacy. While exact figures on the numbers of minority language adults needing literacy instruction are not available, some estimate that about one third of all language minority adults need some kind of literacy instruction. If one looks at the enrollment records of Adult Education programs funded under the Adult Education Act during 1987-1988, almost one third (900,000) of the 3 million adults enrolled were in ESL programs. Moreover, this enrollment is likely to increase, since many language minority adults are enrolled in short-term special programs funded for amnesty recipients (under SLIAG funds), and when that portion of funding has been exhausted, many are likely to seek continued English language, literacy, and other instrction.

Literacy program providers need to consider a number of factors when providing services to this diverse population. The first is the degree of literacy. Some, for example the Hmong and Haitians, may be preliterate: that is, they may come from an oral culture, with their language unwritten, and not have had access to education in another language which is written. Others may have written languages, but have had little or no education or prior literacy. Still others may be literate. For literate adults, who seek to transfer their skills to English language literacy, the important consideration is the script in which they learned to read. Those who have learned to read a language written in the Roman alphabet (as is English) will have an easier time acquiring English language literacy than those (for example, Arabic speakers, Russians, or many East Indians) who have learned to read in a non-Roman alphabetic system. The degree of literacy will have a great effect on the kinds of instruction that should be provided and the amount of time that will be needed. Preliterates, with strong oral memories, should be taught differently and will need more time than those who have some experience with literacy.

Another factor to consider is the degree of English proficiency which the individual has and its effect on the choice of language for literacy. There are powerful arguments for native language literacy, including cultural maintenance, continuity of learning, and the relative ease of transfer of literacy skills from one's native language to a second. Arguments against mother tongue literacy and for English language literacy include time, the use of the proposed literacy (for example, citizenship or work), as well as practical considerations such as availability of teachers/tutors or materials

in the first language. For practical purposes, many adults choose to become literate in English, but there should be a choice!

The types of literacy programs for limited English proficient adults vary dramatically, from basic or initial literacy, through survival skills/functional literacy, amnesty/citizenship literacy, workplace and workforce literacy, GED or basic skills literacy, and family/intergenerational literacy. It is important to involve the adult learner in the design of the program: from the choice of language to the purposes for which literacy is being developed. In almost all cases, however, oral English (listening and speaking) will play a role in the instruction, since even those desiring first language literacy are likely to want to improve their oral English and eventually, even transfer their literacy skills from their native language to English.

It is important to remember that literacy is both a process and a continuum--that there are a number of literacies--not just a set of skills to be developed and then applied across all social situations. These need to be addressed in culturally appropriate ways, ways that will transfer to the social and cultural environment of the learner. Hence, literacy program providers need to become familiar with the community and to involve the community in the literacy provision. In fact, the ethnic community offers potential tutors who can provide first language literacy, when requested.

The ethnolinguistically diverse second language population provides "insurmountable opportunities" for all of us in literacy education.

The Role of Newspapers in Literacy Education: the Experiences of Gio Grande Valley
Jack C. Hatfield,

I am pleased to be able to share today our experiences, in the Rio Grande Valley, in dealing with the illiteracy problem, an experience which is truly a grass roots effort, spearheaded and sustained by my own group of daily newspapers.

Two diverging trends in our country are, or should be, cause for concern. That is, the increasing trend of adult illiterates (caused by various factors) and the downward trend of a shrinking labor pool. I have brought several handouts of a little booklet which describes, in narrative form, some of the things we have been or are still doing. The most important of these are:

1. We have established 5 literacy centers, where tutoring, tutor training, tutor recruitment, and referrals all take place. The first opened in October 1986; the last, just one month ago.

2. We have sponsored a "Ready to Read" workshop, using the newspaper as a text for teaching reading. We are presently teaching two classes a week in Brownsville and Harlingen using this technique.

3. We have sponsored a 3-day Symposium during teh past two years, featuring national speakers such as Walter Anderson and Jonathon Kozol, wich has provided a forum of the interchange of innovative approaches.

4. We publish a bi-monthly newsletter on all Valley literacy activities.

5. We have created four television public service announcements using the mayor, our publisher, and others to urge people to volunteer as tutors.

6. We have publishe a series of ads on adult illiteracy, also designed to recruit tutors.

7. We hired a part-time Literacy Coordinator.

8. We are helping to establish innovative curriculum changes in hte school sytem and have established a study program in conjunction Up with People. Students study a particular country and then a representative from the cast visits the classroom. Students also write essays about the country and the newspapers publish a special section with the best essays.

9. We sell Roads of Texas atlases at a $3 mark-up, donating this mark-up to the Literavcy Centers. We also sell waste paper from all 3 plants, generating several thousand dollars a year which we contribute to the Literacy Centers.

These are just a few of the activities that we sponsor. None of the activities are, by themselves, vital, but the collective effect of them is tremendous. The results are quite positive: to date, we have trained over 300 tutors and have served over 700 students. And, we have some big plans for the future, which include establishing more literacy centers, establishing a computerized reading lab, acquiring and using bilingual videotapes in our ESOL

programs, expanding our workplace literacy program, establishing better liaison with colleges in the are and enlisting their youthful enthusiasm, and encouraging more cvhurches and social organizations to join in the fight against illiteracy.

I want to end by emphasizing the point James Duffy made. You should enlist the help of the media in your area. Many newspapers now have an ongoing literacy campaign and will be glad to work with you. What matters is that literacy happens and people learn to read. All else is secondary.